

- (47) *Hylocichla guttata pallasii*.—Hermit Thrush. Rather common.
- (48) *Planesticus migratorius*.—Robin. Very common.
- (49) *Sialia sialis*.—Bluebird. Common.

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THE STATUS OF THE PASSENGER PIGEON (*Ectopistes migratorius*) IN EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA.

"In view of the fact that every good bird student will be looking out for Passenger Pigeons this summer, I write to give you a little information which, however, may not be much good, but nevertheless will interest you. At Mt. Gettysburg, Lebanon County, Pa., where our military company often goes on their summer camp, Mr. Vernon Wallace, of this town, saw a pair of Passenger Pigeons in the trees about the camp, between May 1 and 15 (favorable dates). Birds were rather tame at first, but soon became wild, and, after three days, did not return from the wooded mountain side (nearby), to where they invariably flew when disturbed. Mr. Wallace is an experienced hunter and could not be mistaken. I submit this bit of information because the location is not far from your home. News twelve years old may be stale, but nevertheless it may be a case of 'staler the better.'" So writes Mr. J. Warren Jacobs in a recent note, and recalls to my mind an instance of a single egg taken from a frail nest in a cedar tree, near Columbia, Lancaster County, in 1889, by Mr. Lionel F. Bowers—my companion in many a boyish collecting trip. I examined the egg, listened to his description of the bird, and had no doubt of its identity.

On the other hand, Mr. E. W. Campbell's recent record in Luzerne County, of a "resident pair, reared young" (*Oologist*, Vol. xxiii, 1906, p. 108), is open to question. He also reports the Least Sandpiper "pair with young." Mr. William B. Crispin's set of two eggs "collected in Potter County for F. T. Pember by A. Lyon, May 3, 1878"; (*Oologist*, xxiv, 1907, p. 155), are probably the eggs of some variety of the do-

mestic bird. According to the late Major Charles E. Bendire, and others, Pember's localities were taken at random, his collectors fictitious, his data in his own handwriting and creations of his own mind.

It is a popular opinion of the hunters of Monroe County, that the vast flocks were blown out to sea and perished. The hunters were accustomed to visit the nesting places at night and kill the birds with clubs and poles; the breasts were removed, smoked and strung up for future consumption! Of course this would have no effect upon its abundance? In Chester County, the bird was netted with the aid of captives. I have heard from good authority of one netter who stopped marketing only when it no longer paid, the price having fell to *three cents a dozen*. The collection of the late Mr. J. W. Sharp, of Berwyn, contains a single mounted specimen, unfortunately without data, but doubtless shot in the vicinity. Probably the last birds shot in the neighborhood were secured by Dr. H. R. Wharton, in a wood near Strafford, 1878.

I copy from my Journal, under the date of April 17, 1901: "Father remarked to-day at noon that he had seen something he had not observed for a good many years — a flock of Wild Pigeons, fifteen altogether. He knew them from Doves, being larger, darker and more robust. He said there was no mistake, he had shot and handled many of them in days gone by." I referred the matter to Mr. W. J. Hoxie, another old-timer. He replied: "In regard to the Wild Pigeon I would certainly say 'good,' for the dark underparts alone will distinguish the flying birds from the Doves. There are points of movement and general modeling not at all easy to describe."

It is barely possible that the species breeds somewhere in eastern Pennsylvania. If so, may it be delivered from its friends! The only practical way of protecting the bird, if it be not extinct, is to include the Mourning Dove in a general protective law; for not one person in a hundred can differentiate the two species.

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